2: Gervis T-3 (no date) 1954 AV1 Kashmir AV1



army service. During the time that these Poonch men have been away they have kept touch with their homes by sending back amounts from their pay; small sums they would seem to be outside Poonch, but of greater value there, where much of the food is grown, and the necessities of life are small. These men of Poonch—and this applies to Gilgit men also—will sometimes remain away from their wives and families for five or six years, the old father or even the wife tending the land, a small portion of which most of them own and return to for a few weeks to see their families; the wives will have remained faithful, for the women of Poonch have always been held to a high moral standard. Although the men of Poonch may, when away, contract a temporary marriage—in any case the Muslims amongst them being permitted four wives—they demand of their women that they should behave as though their husbands were at home, the humiliation brought upon him in the event of his wife's adultery being so great that he will demand the most severe penalty of the woman. Only recently I had personal knowledge of a sepoy who had been away from his wife for some years. His brother had written telling him that his wife was becoming loose in her morals, then that she was pregnant. The husband returned home on leave, saw his brother, next the brothers of his wife, and then his wife; she was in the kitchen sitting before the stove when he entered, as she stood up to greet him he saw her condition, and without a word fired a burst from his sten gun; she staggered forward to fall at his feet, and well knowing why he had done this, with her dying gasp begged his forgiveness. Her brothers and her father knew why he had taken this dramatic step; they made no protest; in their eyes he had only done as they would have with one of their wives under such circumstances, and he was allowed to flee back to his unit.

In the villages or close to the few houses round the farms there is always to be seen a man or woman washing clothes in the manner of the place, by stamping the dirt out of them in a water-filled, hollowed-out stone by the stream. In that part there are also to be found the little round huts, often built of straw, housing the large mill-stones which grind the corn grown thereabouts. These are usually attended to by the old man who has retired from active work, his charge for grinding being a percentage of the flour.